



*Stephanie Rawlings-Blake*  
Mayor

## PLANNING COMMISSION

*Wilbur E. "Bill" Cunningham, Chairman*

### STAFF REPORT



*Thomas J. Stosur*  
Director

**February 27, 2014**

**REQUEST:** Minor Amendment & Revised Final Design Approval/1401-1415 East Cold Spring Lane PUD #76

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval.

**STAFF:** Anthony Cataldo

**PETITIONER(S):** Schwabor Holdings

**OWNER:** Cold Spring Shopping Center, LLC

#### **SITE/ GENERAL AREA**

Site Conditions: This property, located on the south side of East Cold Spring Lane just east of the intersection on E. Cold Spring Lane and Loch Raven Boulevard. The site measures approximately 437' by 195' and is currently improved with a one-story commercial building and associated parking. The site is zoned B-1-1.

General Area: The property is located adjacent to a Public Library and within a community of rowhouses and multifamily apartments. This commercial building is constructed of brick and fronts E. Cold Spring Lane. The site is accessed on all four sides with use of the public streets and alleys. Carved out of the site are individual garage parcels which have direct access off of the alley.

#### **HISTORY**

- Ordinance #755 was approved on June 2, 1991 and established the 1401-1415 East Cold Spring Lane PUD.
- On August 15, 1991 the Planning Commission approved a Minor Amendment in the design of the PUD to allow for a covered fire escape and alterations to the window detailing to accommodate a tenant.
- Ordinance #403 was approved on June 20, 1994 which amended the enabling legislation by inserting a list of permitted uses which was previously omitted.

#### **CONFORMITY TO PLANS**

The proposed action is consistent with the City of Baltimore's Comprehensive Master Plan, LIVE EARN PLAY LEARN, Live Goal 1, Objective 2: Strategically redevelop vacant properties throughout the City. The current use of this commercial site is retail shops but the

majority of the center is currently vacant; the proposed modification would support the attraction of additional retailers to fill this commercial space along the Cold Spring Lane Corridor.

## **ANALYSIS**

The owner of the shopping center, in the effort to create more modern and desirable retail space, is seeking to construct a single loading dock on the east side of the existing commercial building, adjacent to the largest retail space. The center is currently less than fifty percent occupied and the lack of a loading dock has limited the ability to attract a tenant to the space. Loading docks are typical needs of commercial space but because it will be a built addition within the PUD, the Minor Amendment is needed in order for the applicant to construct it. The grade on the site slopes significantly from E. Cold Spring Lane to the southern alley. As such, by placing the loading dock along the eastern edge of the existing structure, not only does it have direct access to the largest tenant space, but it also uses the current grade change to its advantage. The placement is also adjacent to the City owned parcel (the Library) and furthest removed from the existing homes. Trucks would utilize Kelway Road and the existing alleys to access the loading dock and would exit directly onto E. Cold Spring Lane. Site Plan Review Committee reviewed and approved the proposed site plan on December 4, 2013.

In addition to the loading dock, the applicant would like to paint the exterior and slightly modify the signage band along the E. Cold Spring Lane façade. A board on board fence is also being added to the loading area to screen the view and additional landscaping is being added to the site. Department of Planning staff designers reviewed and approved the proposal.

The position of the proposed loading dock does remove some existing parking. A parking variance to account for the displaced parking may need approval of the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals.

In advance of this meeting, staff notified Original Northwood, Hillen Road Improvement Association, New Northwood Community Association, Inc., and Councilmembers Curran and Henry of this action.



**Thomas J. Stosur**  
**Director**